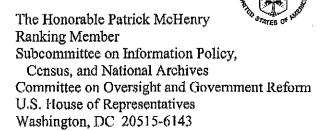
JUN 23 2009



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE Economics and Statistics Administration U.S. Census Bureau

Washington, DC 20233-0001 OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

## Dear Representative McHenry:

This is in response to your cosigned letter dated May 11, 2009, regarding your concerns about the involvement of ACORN in the 2010 Census National Partnership Program.

ACORN is one of thousands of organizations we will be partnering with as we approach the enormous challenge of mobilizing the entire country to participate in the 2010 Census. Others include Catholic Charities, the NAACP, Marathon Oil, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the Blind Veterans Associations, the American Statistical Association, Goodwill Industries, Target Stores, and even Western Union, to name just a few. We expect have more than 100,000 partners overall. Many of these organizations have strong ties to traditionally undercounted populations. They are especially helpful in encouraging groups such as the poor, the linguistically isolated, or new immigrants to mail back the census forms and cooperate with enumerators. They know their local conditions and circumstances, and they can help to expand participation.

The agreements we sign with our partner organizations are informal commitments that they make to raise awareness about the census and encourage their members or customers to fully participate in the census. We are now negotiating with all of our partners to determine the best ways that they can leverage their capabilities to help achieve the Constitutional mandate we have to count everyone living in the United States once, only once, and in the right place. To that end we believe that ACORN can help raise awareness and encourage cooperation with the 2010 Census in the communities they serve, which are among the hardest to count. They will not be recruiting or hiring census employees, providing questionnaire assistance centers, or helping people respond to the census.

Our Partnership Program combines the strengths of state, local, and tribal governments, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, schools, media, businesses, and others to ensure an accurate 2010 Census. Our partners carry the message to members of their communities that participating in the census is important, it is safe, and it is essential to serving local needs. 2010 Census partners are not Census Bureau employees, and they have no responsibility for collecting or processing census data.

If you have any additional questions, please have a member of your staff contact our Congressional Affairs Office at (301) 763-6100.

Sincerely.

Thomas L. Mesenbourg
Acting Director

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